Guidelines for FY 2013 RTC Overall Documentation Process and Submission

1. Funds must be encumbered between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. All goods and services must be received during this time period. **FUNDS NOT SPENT REVERT TO THE STATE OF IOWA GENERAL FUND.**
2. Receiving funding from the General Fund Regional Telecommunications Councils (RTC) appropriation is similar to receiving financial support in the form of a grant. Proper documentation and reporting elements must be submitted to the ICN to justify the allocation submitted to the community colleges for regional video support.
3. In order to receive the requested budgeted amount, each RTC **will be required to** submit a "Regional Support Services Plan", on or before the timeframes established, AND comply with all additional guidelines set forth within this document. **PLANS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2012 OR FINANCIAL PENALTIES MAY BE INCURRED BY THE SPECIFIC RTC.**
4. The Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission's (ITTC) established a five (5)-member sub-committee who will review all components submitted by each RTC. After review, the materials will be submitted to the entire ITTC for approval.
    a) The sub-committee is comprised of members from the following: one member representing the ITTC, one member representing the community colleges, two members representing the Education Telecommunications Council (ETC) (current and past chairs), and one member representing ICN staff.
5. Funding will be allocated by the ITTC to each RTC twice during the fiscal year by following the guidelines listed in item 7. No RTC may receive the requested allocation as a one-time allotment.
    a) A fiscal agent must be selected to receive the funds. No administrative fees may be charged for acting as fiscal agent. The RTC should determine that the agency/institution designated as fiscal agent is prepared to accept responsibility for seeing that funds are properly audited.
    b) The ITTC must approve the "Regional Support Services Plan" before the first half of the requested RTC budget amounts are released to the RTC fiscal agent. The second half of the requested budget will be associated with the first half of the fiscal year's tracking component (guidelines listed in item 7) for all three support functions which will be approved by the ITTC in February/March during the current Fiscal Year. Once tracking documents of the first half is approved by ITTC, the remaining portion of the allocation will be released to the RTC fiscal agent.
    c) Each community college's chief financial officer or equivalent, who is charged with acting as fiscal agent for the RTC, will certify and approve that he/she will review the expenditures incurred on the **Certification of Accountability and Transparency Form,** which is to be submitted and accompanied by the **Regional Support Services Plan**. If support services are provided by other regional entities such as Area Educational Agencies (AEAs), their fiscal agents (CFO or equivalent) should also certify that they will review and approved the expenditures incurred by their organization.
    d) Each community college's chief financial officer or equivalent, who is charged with acting as fiscal agent for the RTC, will certify and approve that he/she has reviewed the expenditures incurred on the **Certification of Final Financial Accounting Form**, which is to be submitted and accompanied by the **Annual Follow-up Report** within thirty (30) days after the close of the fiscal year. If support services are provided by other regional entities such as Area Educational Agencies (AEAs), their fiscal agents (CFO or equivalent) should also certify that they reviewed and approved the expenditures incurred by their organization.
6. ITTC stresses the importance of transparency, accountability, and documentation within this RTC allocation process. ICN staff will perform **spot reviews** of selected RTC regions and documents certified by fiscal agents to ensure that the appropriation funding is being spent as identified on the submitted plan. All RTC regions/personnel should retain and document all region-specific expenditures, tracking logs, plans, reports, and additional information that support the documents submitted to the ITTC/ICN. **ALL DOCUMENTED INFORMATION SUBMITTED SHOULD BE EASILY ATTAINABLE BY THE RTC IN THE EVENT THE ITTC (AND/OR ICN) IS AUDITED AND REQUESTS FURTHER DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT THE INFORMATION THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED IN THE DOCUMENTED COMPONENTS. ALL DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE RETAINED FOR THREE (3) FISCAL YEARS.**

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Guidelines for FY 2013 RTC Overall Documentation Process and Submission

- There will be a random selection of approximately three (3) RTCs for spot reviews at the end of each fiscal year. Within five (5) years, if an RTC is not selected by the random selection process, a review of the previous fiscal year's documentation will be completed. RTCs will be required to maintain documentation of expenditures and other information relating to the plan for three years after the completion of the fiscal year.

7. There are three (3) documentation components (plan, tracking, and report) associated with the funding and compliance with the provision timeframes for all elements must be met. All documentation and deadline requirements must be met by each RTC requesting funding.

   a) **Regional Support Services Plan Submission** - The "Regional Support Services Plan" will serve as the format for the regional plan application. The RTC is responsible for assigning responsibility for each support service item and developing a budget to complete such services. The RTC is also responsible for providing an estimate of the amount of each type of support service included in the template. The budget should be clearly tied to each of the four areas and the activities described in the plan. As is often the case, needs listed may exceed the funds appropriated. In-kind matches by the regional partners are encouraged. Please note in-kind contributions on the budget page. Expenditures for sections A through C of the "Regional Support Services Plan" should each be between 15-40%. If the RTC wishes to budget an amount outside the 15-40% range in any of these categories, unanimous approval by a quorum of RTC members is required (see guideline #6). In addition, a written explanation (no more than three paragraphs) must be submitted to the ITTC along with the Regional Support Services Plan describing how the additional percentage of funds will fund the designated support function. Anything short of a unanimous vote requires that each area of the budget be within the prescribed range. Section D contains required coordination duties. No RTC funds may be expended for Section D coordination activities. Sections E and F are optional. RTC funds may be expended for these duties, but they are not required.

   b) **Tracking Submission** *NEW* - Each support function (technicians, LAN/WAN, and schedulers) will be required to submit documentation monthly that supports each area's responsibility to ICN for review. ITTC wants to stress the importance of documentation, transparency, and accountability within this RTC allocation process. This additional information also highlights the importance of the regional functions and the benefits that schools and others receive due to the support services provided on a daily basis.
      a. **RTC Technicians** – RTC Technicians must submit ALL work orders using the already established processes within ICN's Service Desk (phone call or email to ICN NOC), including work orders that do not involve the ICN. Additional fields have been included, to provide format to ensure all RTC technicians send consistent information. Work orders will be pulled and reviewed by ICN internal staff at least monthly to ensure all functions are being documented for review by the ITTC.
      b. **RTC Schedulers** – RTC Schedulers must submit monthly electronic spreadsheets/forms to lori.larsen@iowa.gov by the 10th of the following month. Spreadsheets/forms will be compiled and reviewed by ICN internal staff at least monthly to ensure all functions are being documented for review by the ITTC.
      c. **RTC/AEA LAN/WAN Support** - RTC Consultants must submit monthly electronic spreadsheets/forms to lori.larsen@iowa.gov by the 10th of the following month. Spreadsheets/forms will be complied and reviewed by ICN internal staff at least monthly to ensure all functions are being documented for review by the ITTC.
         i. In June 2013, each AEA should submit a list of the school districts that the RTC funding supports along with the current (2012/2013) and predicted bandwidth usage, increased percentage, and which districts are planning or have in place the 1:1 initative.

   c) **Annual Follow-up Report Submission** *REVISED* - Each Regional Telecommunications Council (RTC) receiving allocations from the FY 2013 General Fund RTC appropriation (Senate File 2313) must submit an Annual Follow-up Report within **thirty (30) days of the fiscal year end (July 30, 2013)**. **Release of the next fiscal year's funding for each RTC**

will be dependent upon the receipt and approval of the Annual Follow-up Report. The information provided by these documents will be used in a variety of ways to demonstrate impact and accountability of the RTC appropriation distributed by the ITTC. If the support is provided by an entity other than the Community College, such as an AEA, the fiscal agent for that institution should also provide a signed certification of their Fiscal Financial Accounting.

8. All Regional Support Services plans and reports must be approved by a quorum of members within each RTC region. **(A quorum is 6 of the 9 members ([Code of Iowa, Chapter 4.1(25)](#))**

   a) RTC members involved in the tracking elements required to receive funding should abstain from voting, since the involvement of the support function is an element reviewed for funding by the ITTC.

   b) **RTC Vacancies:** The Education Telecommunications Council (ETC) coordinates filling vacant RTC positions. Contact Debbie Fiscus Debbie@iptv.org (515/242-4155) for more information.

Guidelines for FY 2013 RTC Overall Documentation Process and Submission

<u>DEADLINES</u>
All documentation components must be complied with by the identified timeframes or financial penalties may be incurred by the specific RTC.

RTC PLAN/BUDGET SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 1, 2012:
Earlier submission of the RTC plan/budget is possible: The first opportunity for approval of plans is at the **September 20** Commission meeting. If an RTC would like their plan/budget to be considered at this meeting, the plan/budget should be submitted to ICN by **August 1**. The next scheduled Commission meeting is **October 17**. To be included on the October Commission meeting agenda, the plan/budget should be submitted to ICN by **September 1**. September 1 is the **final date** that RTC plans will be accepted by the ICN/ITTC.

- Funds within the plan may only be allocated for equipment/software purchases that support long-term region-wide needs. For example: scheduling hardware, Internet software necessary for Web-based scheduling platforms, software for video classroom computers so that a consistent "regional package" is in place for students and instructors, regional loaner parts depot for ICN video classroom and/or Internet service, diagnostic hardware/software used for troubleshooting ICN video classrooms and/or local area networks. Expenditures for these items may not exceed 15% of the total regional allocation. Funds spent for this purpose are optional and are NOT considered when calculating the percentage ranges for Sections A through C.

- Ineligible expenditures include:
  - Purchase of equipment other than as described in item 7;
  - Monthly or annual Internet access fees;
  - Subsidizing or funding hourly ICN video fees for semester-long classes except as they are part of RTC mini-grant programs that would provide seed money or pay start-up costs to encourage development of video or Web-based classes;
  - Costs related to relocating an ICN video classroom (such as building remodeling);
  - Basic coordination of RTC meetings.

RTC MONTHLY TRACKING:

- SUBMISSION WILL **ONLY** BE ACCEPTED ELECTRONICALLY USING THE PROVIDED SPREADSHEETS/FORMS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE RTC TECHNICAL SUPPORT [see guideline item 7.b).a].
- Monthly spreadsheets/forms must be submitted to lori.larsen@iowa.gov by the 10th of the following month.
  - The second half of the requested RTC budget will be associated with the first half of the fiscal year's tracking component (guidelines listed in item 7) for all three support functions. If support function tracking component is not received by the designated deadlines, financial penalties may be incurred by the RTC.
- Reviewing and approval will be required by the ITTC before the second half of requested RTC budget will be allocated. Approval will be provided no later than the March 2013 Commission meeting.

RTC ANNUAL FOLLOW-UP REPORT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JULY 30, 2013:

Funds must be encumbered between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. **FUNDS NOT SPENT REVERT TO THE STATE OF IOWA GENERAL FUND.**

- Each RTC funded through the General Fund RTC appropriation (Senate File 2313) must submit an Annual Follow-up Report within **thirty (30) days of the fiscal year end**.
- Release of the following fiscal year's funding for the RTC is dependent upon the receipt and approval of the Annual Follow-up Report.

- Reports should be limited to no more than two (2) pages (double-spaced, 12 point Arial font), and should be written to read as a unified document for each individual RTC. The report should respond to the following items:
    1. Describe how the funds you requested on the *Regional Support Services Plan* were spent. For each specific service listed, your region must be able to clearly document how these funds were spent.
    2. What challenges have you encountered regarding the provision of support services in your region?
    3. Explain any changes or improvements (if any) your region will make to its *Regional Support Services Plan* for this next fiscal year.
    4. If available, provide amount of in-kind funding/support received from additional entities and a brief statement *(no more than two sentences)*.
- Each community college's chief financial officer (CFO) or equivalent, who is charged with acting as fiscal agent for the RTC, will certify and approve that he/she has reviewed the expenditures incurred on the *Certification of Final Financial Accounting* form within thirty (30) days after the end of the fiscal year. If support services are provided by other regional entities, such as Area Educational Agencies (AEAs), their fiscal agents (CFO or equivalent) should also certify that they reviewed and approved the expenditures incurred by their organization.

WARNING STEPS

Each Regional Telecommunications Council (RTC) must follow the guidelines set forth by the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission (ITTC) associated to the State of Iowa's General Fund appropriation, Senate File (SF) 2313. The following warnings could be issued by the ITTC and/or Iowa Communications Network (ICN) staff if an RTC failed to follow the guidelines, which could result in one or all of the below actions up to and including financial penalties.

1. Formal verbal warning / written warning to the RTC support individual(s) involved in providing the support function.
2. Written warning by email to the RTC Coordinator involved in overseeing the support function, AND the chief financial officer (CFO) for the community college authorizing the RTC budget.
3. RTC Coordinator *(carbon copying the Education Telecommunications Council Chair)* must submit in writing an explanation for not complying with the guidelines listed to the ITTC subcommittee for review. A response will be provided from a representative of the ITTC subcommittee to the RTC support individual(s).
4. RTC Coordinator *(carbon copying the Education Telecommunications Council Chair)* must submit in writing an explanation for not complying with the guidelines listed to the entire ITTC for review. A response will be provided from a representative of the ITTC or designated ICN staff member to the RTC support individual, which could result in reduction or a loss of financial budgeted allocation.

All warnings initiated will be appropriately documented for accountability and transparency.

	First Occasion	**Second Occasion**	**Third Occasion**	**Fourth Occasion**
Warning	Verbal Warning / Written Warning to support individual	Written Warning to RTC Coordinator / CC CFO	ITTC Subcommittee Written Response	ITTC Written Response
Warning	Written Warning to RTC Coordinator / CC CFO	ITTC Subcommittee Written Response	ITTC Written Response	
Warning	ITTC Subcommittee Written Response	ITTC Written Response		
Warning	ITTC Written Response			

Guidelines for FY 2013 RTC Overall Documentation Process and Submission

POSTING OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

When the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission was formed in 1994, it was authorized to develop advisory committees. Since the Education Telecommunications Council (ETC) and Regional Telecommunications Councils (RTC) are identified in Chapter 8D of the Code of Iowa, the entities are required to follow the Open Meeting Law procedures as identified in Chapter 21.

Each council should submit an **electronic agenda notice** to lori.larsen@iowa.gov one week prior to the scheduled meeting. Once submitted, the notices will be posted on ICN's website and follow the ITTC's open meeting requirements.

Councils should submit the meeting notes/minutes to lori.larsen@iowa.gov to be posted on ICN's website within two months after the meeting.

Iowa Administrative Code (Administrative Rules), Chapter 751

SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION COMPONENTS TO:

Electronic submissions are required and encouraged for all other documentation. Send to Lori Larsen at ICN: lori.larsen@iowa.gov.